

Sudoku Fever

R-G Productions—MTC Up The Alley

I went to this play to get out of the rain. Little did I know that the inside of the venue would be equally as wet—wet from the tears that I shed knowing I had lost an hour of my life to such drivel.

SPOILER ALERT: To answer the question on the poster (George knows...But does Regan?)

YES!

Adam Fuhr

The Pig Of Happiness

Big Empty Barn—Playhouse Studio

Bremner Duthie gives a riveting performance—as himself—in his account of his quest for personal happiness.

There's nothing self-indulgent about this show. Yes, it is autobiographical and introspective, but Duthie has layered his script with speculation as to how others attempt to find happiness despite tragedy (with prominent, emotion-filled references to the horror and carnage of the First World War), as well as with philosophical musings about happiness and fulfillment.

So you may take him at his word, or allow your mind to form its own interpretations. Or simply sit back and enjoy the passion he brings to his acting.

The show is also a vehicle for Duthie's unique cabaret-jazz vocal stylings. Accompanying himself on ukulele, concertina or looper, he sings several songs from different eras and genres—on one occasion evoking laughter from his audience by slyly combining Perry Como and Kurt Cobain in a medley.

As with his latest CD, "The Sky Was Blue", Duthie interprets the words of the songs as an actor interprets his lines in a script. He feasts on the notes and devours the lyrics.

Robin Chase

Psycho Bitch

PK Pin Up Productions—Aqua Books

A wonderful performance by Tamara Lynn Robert as she discusses—and paints a picture of—mental illness.

It's not always an easy topic to tackle, but she is able to convey the difficulties of facing society while dealing with depression, suicidal tendencies, and trying to get help. She shows the humorous side too, including sessions with a psychic who tries "finding her soul" with singing.

Searching for answers, she goes to a myriad of doctors until she finally comes across one—whom she refers to as Dr. Wonderful—who listens, and helps.

After reluctantly taking the chemical highway to deal with her depression, she finally finds some happiness. However, there are still daily crises she must deal with, including a dear friend's suicide attempt.

All and all a beautiful and eloquent piece on mental health.

Kevin Campbell

African Folktales with Erik de Waal

YAP Theatre—KIDS Venue SCD

Erik never disappoints, whether he is performing for children or adults. I have seen all his adult plays and my 3-year-old granddaughter gave me the perfect reason to see a kids' play.

The kids sit on the floor in front so as to be close and involved in the action. The kids are asked to participate verbally, but one cocky young lad tried to hijack Erik's play. Erik finally had to demand "Will you let me talk!?"

Fun was had by all as we were transported by this charming teller of tales.

Lisa Campbell

Breast Friends

Kimmy Zee—Warehouse

This show exceeded my expectations. I went because I like the past work of several of the performers, but I wasn't sure about the premise.

I needn't have worried; this is a funny, intelligent and at times touching exploration of women's breasts, and although definitely adult entertainment, it's always tasteful.

It played mainly for laughs, but my favourite part was the moving scene where they acknowledge breast cancer. I had a lump in my throat from the beginning. My only disappointment was the delivery of Alison Fields' piece about breast feeding. On the day I attended, (Friday) she rushed her delivery to the point where she tripped over her tongue and had to restart a line. That was too bad, because her monologue was very densely written, and I would have liked to process it a bit more thoroughly as she delivered it.

All of the performers did great work, but the highlight for me was Heather Witherden, mainly because I haven't seen her work before. I'm not much of a fan of stand-up, but she totally won me over with a sharp, funny routine that she delivered with style and impeccable timing.

Kevin Longfield

Too exposed? Too taboo? Too biological? Too functional? Too aesthetic? Too big? Too small? They talk about it all!

Breast Friends recounts everyday challenges encountered by women over a simple body part; and for men, it provides perspectives (aside from the usual one!) that we don't normally think about.

This witty variety show ranges from sombre to silly but you'll be entertained throughout. Some side-busting moments etch permanent visions in your head. I will never look at a lingerie sale bin the same again! And I'll definitely know what NOT to buy for my wife!

Ray Yuen

Theatre Anywhere

Presents

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By Ross McMillan and Sharon Bajer

Directed by Eileen Longfield

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